



5♀/5♂ No Modern European Democracy Without Gender Equality

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EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT ELECTIONS RESULTS 2009: REPRESENTATION OF WOMEN

The 2009 European elections took place in the 27 EU Member States on 4-7 June 2009. After the elections, the percentage of women in the European Parliament (EP), the only directly elected institution of the European Union (EU), **stands at 35%**. Although the results are a progress compared to the approximate 30% at the beginning of the 1999-2004 term and 16% for the first EP election in 1979, the EP again fails to attain parity or even the 40% of women threshold agreed by Member States of the Council of Europe.

1) Percentages of women in the new and former European Parliaments, by Member State

The outcome of the elections shows that almost **a quarter of the Member States (8 by number) now have more than 40% women** Members of the European Parliament (MEPs): Finland (61%), Sweden (55.5%), Estonia (50%); Netherlands (48%), Bulgaria (47%), Denmark (46.2%), France (45.8%), and Austria (41.1%), with two countries having more women than men MEPs (Finland and Sweden).

11 of the EU Member States reach a level of between 30 and 40% female representation in the new EP, with the majority of these (8) crossing the threshold of 35%.

For 8 other Member States, women's representation did not reach the minimum threshold of 30% - Slovenia (28.5%), Lithuania (25%), Ireland (25%), Italy (25%), Poland (22%), the Czech Republic (18.2%), Luxembourg (16%) – and Malta having for the second time not a single woman elected to the European Parliament.

In terms of **actual increase of female presence**, Germany has the leading position with 6 more women elected in June 2009 compared to during the 2004 –2009 legislative period. The UK follows with an increase of 5 women, Poland with 4 more women and then Bulgaria, Finland and Italy with 3 additional women each.

The **biggest decrease of women** among elected MEPs in any Member State was in Spain, where the number of women declined by 3. The Maltese female representation in the EP remains nil.

Comparing with the national level, for all Member States (except two: Belgium and Spain), women's representation is **better in the European Parliament** than in the national parliaments.

Table 1: Percentage of women in the new European Parliament by Member State, compared to the 2004-2009 EP and to the percentage of women in national parliaments

Member State	Total seats ¹	Number of women ¹	% of women in EP (2009-2014) ¹	% of women in the former EP (2004-2009) ²	% of women in the national parliaments ³
FINLAND	13	8	62%	42.9%	41.5%
SWEDEN	18	10	56%	47.4%	47%
ESTONIA	6	3	50%	50%	20.8%
NETHERLANDS	25	12	48%	48.2%	41.3%
BULGARIA	17	8	47%	44.4%	21.7%
DENMARK	13	6	46%	42.9%	38%
FRANCE	72	33	44%	44.9%	18.2%
AUSTRIA	17	7	41%	27.8%	28.4%
SLOVAKIA	13	5	38%	35.7%	19.3%
LATVIA	8	3	38%	22.2%	20%
GERMANY	99	37	37%	33.3%	32.3%
BELGIUM	22	8	36%	29.2%	35.3%
HUNGARY	22	8	36%	37.5%	11.1%
PORTUGAL	22	8	36%	25%	28.3%
ROMANIA	33	12	36%	28.57%	11.4%
SPAIN	50	15	36%	27.8%	36.3%
UK	72	24	33%	26.9%	19.5%
CYPRUS	6	2	33%	0%	14.3%
GREECE	22	7	32%	29.2%	14.7%
SLOVENIA	7	2	29%	42.86%	13.3%
LITHUANIA	12	3	25%	38%	24%
IRELAND	12	3	25%	38.46%	13.3%
ITALY	72	18	25%	20.5%	21.3%
POLAND	50	11	22%	14.8%	20.2%
CZECH REPUBLIC	22	4	18%	20,8%	15,5%
LUXEMBOURG	6	1	17%	50%	23.3%
MALTA	5	0	0%	0%	8.7%
Total	736	261			
Mean			35.5 %	32.1%	

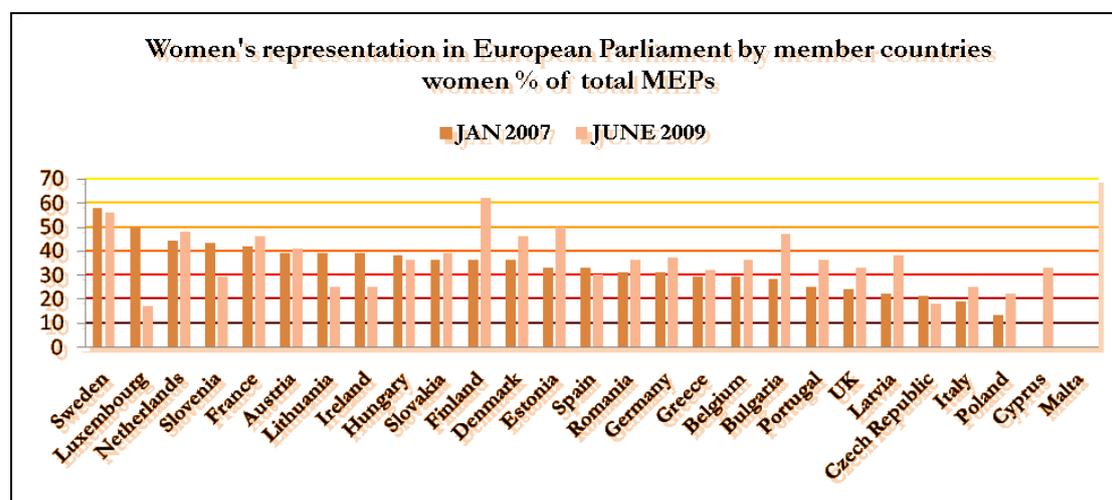
Sources:

¹ Data of columns 1, 2 and 3: TNS opinion in collaboration with EP, provisional results as of 09.07.09

² EP website, www.europarl.europa.eu, accessed March 2009

³ Commission of the European Communities, "Women in European Politics – time for action", January 2009, p.21, Fig.2. Figures rounded to one decimal.

Figure 1: Member States ranked by percentages of women in the European Parliament in January 2007 and June 2009



The comparison is between data collected in January 2007, after Romania and Bulgaria became EU members, and the outcomes of the June 2009 European elections in all 27 Member States. The ranking of the Member States is produced based on the percentages of women MEPs elected by country from the total seats allocated to each country. Source: EP website, www.europarl.europa.eu, January 2007 and July 2009.

2) Women in the European Parliament by Political Group

In terms of the **distribution of seats**, the hierarchy among the three big Political Groups, the European People's Party (EPP), the Group of the Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats in the European Parliament (S&D) (formerly known as the Party of the European Socialists –PSE-), and the Group of the Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe (ALDE), **has not changed significantly** after the June 2009 European elections:

- The **EPP** has 36% of the EP seats, close to the 36.8% it held previously;
- The **S&D** dropped to 25% of seats from holding 27.6%;
- **ALDE** also dropped to 11.4% of seats from 12.7%.

As to the other two Political Groups carried over from the last European Parliament – the Group of the Greens/European Free Alliance (Greens/EFA) and the Confederal Group of the European United Left-Nordic Green Left (GUE/NGL), the changes are as follows:

- The **Greens-EFA increased their presence** within the European Parliament by 2%, going from 5.5% in the last legislature to currently representing 7.5% of MEPs.
- The **GUE-NGL suffered a small decrease** in their representation, dropping from a 5.2% presence to 4.7% of the total number of MEPs.

However, compared to the 2004-2009 term, the situation is **significantly different in terms of women's representation** within the different political groups:

- The **EPP showed the biggest increase** in its proportional representation of women, with an increase of **10 percentage points of women** in the new legislative period: going from 24.3% to **33.6%** ;
- The **S&D actually lose** some women representatives, with **40.2%** women compared to 41.2% in the last legislature;
- **ALDE consolidated** its female representation and has the highest level of the biggest three, with **45.2%** of women in the new legislature, up from 40.4% women in 2004 – 2009.

- The number of women within the **Greens-EFA group seriously increased from 46.5% to 54.5%**. The Greens/EFA now have the highest proportion of female MEPs.
- In the **GUE-NGL group** the presence of women suffered slightly, dropping from 29.3% to **28.5%**.

The newly formed Group of European Conservative and Reformists (**ECR**) has a presence of **12.7% of women** among its representatives.

Conclusions

The **Greens/EFA Group is still leading with a female majority for the first time** at 54.5%; **ALDE and the EPP are making progress** with a good 45% and 33.5% respectively, the **socialists on the whole retain the same rather good figure** of 40.2%, and the **GUE-NGL also remain quite stable** with the lower figure of 28.5%. It should be noted that **the slight overall increase in the number of women in the EP is partly due to the increased representation among centre-right parties**; it is to a lesser degree attributable to increased female representation in parties on the left of the political spectrum.

Table 2: Women in the European Parliament by Political Group

Political Group	% of total number of MEPs (2009-2014)	Number of women in the EP (2009-2014 legislative period)	% of women MEPs (2009-2014)	% of total number of MEPs in the former EP (2004-2009)	% of women members in the former EP (2004-2009)
EPP/EPP-ED	36% (265 out of 736)	89	33.6%	36,8 % (288 out of 782)	24,3%
S&D/PSE	25% (184 out of 736)	74	40,2%	27,6% (216 out of 782)	41,2%
ALDE	11,4% (84 out of 736)	38	45,2%	12,7% (99 out of 782)	40,4%
ECR	7,5% (55 out of 736)	7	12,7%		
Greens-EFA	7,5% (55 out of 736)	30	54.5%	5,5% (43 out of 782)	46,5%
GUE-NGL	4,7% (35 out of 736)	10	28,5%	5,2% (41 out of 782)	29,3%
EFD¹	4% (32 out of 736)	5	15,6%		

¹ EFD: Europe of Freedom and Democracy Group

Source: EP website, www.europarl.europa.eu, accessed 15.07.09

3) Women in the European Parliament's decision-making bodies

a. Chairpersons and Vice-Chairpersons of the EP Committees

The slight increase of female presence within the European Parliament after the June 2009 elections is disproportionately reflected in an increase in the number of women holding positions as Committee Chairpersons and Vice-Chairpersons. Out of the **20 Committee Chairs** plus the two Chairs of the Sub-Committees on Human Rights and Security and Defence, **9 are women (41% - formerly 25%)**. **Out of the 87 Vice-Chairpersons, 31 are occupied by women (36% - formerly 25%)**. Nevertheless, **two of the most important EP Committees have no woman in their leadership**: the Foreign Affairs Committee and Budgetary Control Committee.

Table 3: Chairpersons and Vice-Chairpersons of Parliamentary Committees

EP Committees and Sub-Committees	Chairpersons		Vice-Chairpersons	
	Women	Men	Women	Men
Foreign Affairs		X		4
Budgets		X	1	3
Budgetary Control		X		4
Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs		X	3	1
Economic / Monetary Affairs	X		1	3
Legal Affairs		X	1	3
Industry, Research and Energy		X	2	2
Employment and Social Affairs	X		3	1
Environment, Public Health and Food Safety		X	1	3
Agriculture		X	1	3
Fisheries	X			4
Transports and Tourism		X	1	3
Culture and Education	X		1	3
Development	X		2	2
Constitutional Affairs		X	1	3
Women's Rights	X		4	
Petitions	X		2	2
Regional Development	X		1	3
Human Rights (Sub-Committee)	X		1	2*
Security and Defence (Sub-Committee)		X	1	3
International Trade		X	1	3
Internal Market and Consumer protection		X	3	1
Total in numbers (% of total)	9 41%	13 59%	31 36%	56 64%
%, excl. the Women's Rights Committee	38%	62%	32.5%	67.5%
General % of women	36.7%			
General % of women, excl. the Women's Rights Committee	33.65%			

Source: EP website, www.europarl.europa.eu, accessed 22 July 2009.

* The 4th Vice-Chair of the Human Rights Sub-Committee will be elected on 31 August

b. Chairpersons and Vice-Chairpersons of the Interparliamentary Delegations

Elections to the leadership positions in the EP Delegations will be held in the autumn.

c. Conference of Presidents

The Presidency of the new EP is occupied by a man, as it has been for the history of the EP with two exceptions. The Conference of Presidents is made up of the President of the EP, the leaders of the Political Groups, and a representative of the *Non-Inscrits*. **There is only one woman in the 11-strong Conference of Presidents** of the new EP (and 9 votes as two political groups are represented by their 2 co-presidents), and as a Co-President she effectively holds only half of one of the 9 votes in this body. The Conference of Presidents is the governing body of the EP, responsible for the organisation of Parliament, setting the agenda and its relations with the other Institutions. Assuming that the representative of the *Non-Inscrits* will be a man, this will give only 5.5% of decision-making power in the highest body of the EP to women. This is even worse than during the last legislature, when there were still no full woman presidents, but there were at least 2 women co-presidents, giving women 11% of the decision-making power in this body.

Even if the percentage of women members increased in the centre-right political groups, women largely remain excluded from the top leadership of these. With the exception of the Greens/EFA that elected a woman to the Group Co-Presidency, all the other Political Groups do not have women elected to this decision-making level.

Table 4: Presidents of the Political Groups in the EP by sex

Political Groups	Woman	Man
European People's Party (EPP)		X
Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats (S&D)		X
Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe (ALDE)		X
European Conservatives and Reformists Group (ECR)		X
Greens/ European Free Alliance Group (Greens/EFA)	X	X
European United Left /Nordic Green Left (GUE-NGL)		X
Europe of Freedom and Democracy (EFD)		XX
Total	11.1%	88.8%

Source : http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/public/focus_page/008-58035-201-07-30-901-20090710FCS58034-20-07-2009-2009/default_en.htm

d. Bureau of the European Parliament

Women hold eight of the 20 positions in the Bureau of the EP (40%), which is responsible for matters relating to the budget, administration, organisation and staff. This is up from six out of 20 in the last legislature (30%).

The President of the EP is a man. Six of the 14 Vice-Presidents are women (42.8%), compared to four out of 14 in the last EP (28.5%), but the first Vice-Presidency position has

passed from a woman to a man. As in the last legislature, two of the five Quaestors are women.¹

e. Heads of National Delegations in the political groups of the EP

Within the bigger political groups, the leadership of the National Delegations can represent a powerful position. In the EPP, only 4 of these 30 positions are held by women (13%). The S&D Group has 6 women out of 27 Heads of National Delegations (22%). ALDE performs best with 13 of the 28 positions being allocated to women (46%).

Table 5: Women as Heads of National Delegations within Political Groups

Political Groups	Number of National Delegations	Number of women heads of National Delegations	% of women heads of the National Delegations
European People's Party (EPP)	30	4	13%
Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats (S&D)	27	6	22%
Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe (ALDE)	28	13	46%
European Conservatives and Reformists Group (ECR)	This data is as yet unavailable.		
Greens / European Free Alliance Group (Greens-EFA)	This Group does not have National Delegations.		
European United Left / Nordic Green Left (GUE-NGL)	15	4	27%
Europe of Freedom and Democracy (EFD)	This Group does not have National Delegations.		
Total	100	27	27%

Sources: EPP: <http://www.eppgroup.eu/group/en/deleg.asp>; S & D: http://www.socialistgroup.eu/gpes/public/nadehome.htm?section=NET&category=NADE&request_locale=EN; ALDE : <http://www.alde.eu/en/about-us/national-delegations/>; GUE-NGL: <http://www.quenl.eu/showPage.jsp?ID=325>

2) Conclusions

Women's presence and representation within the European Parliament increased after the June 2009 European elections that took place in all 27 Member States, reaching the level of 35% of the 736 MEPs. This level remains insufficient. Furthermore, women are still disproportionately absent from key leadership positions in the EP. While female leadership of Parliamentary Committees has increased to 38%, in the Conference of Presidents, the key decision-making body of the Parliament, there is only one woman, who as a Co-President, wields only 5.5% of the vote. **Binding measures for the equal representation of women and men are therefore needed in relation to European elections, but also in relation to internal nominations and election processes within the Parliament.** The EWL urges MEPs and political groups to reflect upon this issue and to take as a matter of urgency the relevant measures, which are crucial to establishing a true modern European Democracy.

¹ Source: Parliament of the European Union, Press Release, 17 July 2009, <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+IM-PRESS+20090629BRI57511+ITEM-001-EN+DOC+XML+V0//EN&language=EN>, accessed 25 July 2009